

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BANGKO 25917 080209Z
ACTION HA-02

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
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C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 25917

LIMDIS

EO 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS:SREF
SUBJ: SUGGESTED LETTER RE FEASIBILITY STUDY/PILOT PROJECTS
IN REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT

REF: BANGKOK 25820

1. THERE FOLLOWS RECOMMENDED TEXT OF LETTER FROM
AMBASSADOR TO PRIME MINISTER DEALING WITH THE VICE
PRESIDENT'S OFFER TO MAKE AVAILABLE TWO MILLION DOLLARS
FOR FEASIBILITY STUDIES/PILOT PROJECTS WITH REGARD TO
REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT IN THAILAND.
2. QUOTE DEAR MR. PRIME MINISTER:
3. DURING THE VISIT OF VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE, MY
GOVERNMENT OFFERED TO MAKE TWO MILLION DOLLARS AVAILABLE
TO ASSIST IN EXPLORING THE FEASIBILITY OF LOCAL SETTLEMENT
FOR SOME INDOCHINESE REFUGEES IN THAILAND.
4. THERE ARE NOW APPROXIMATELY 115,000 INDOCHINESE
REFUGEES IN UNHCR-SUPPORTED CAMPS IN THAILAND. THE UNITED
STATES INTENDS TO CONTINUE ACCEPTING INDOCHINESE REFUGEES
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PAGE 02 BANGKO 25917 080209Z

OVER THE LONG TERM; WE ALSO INTEND TO CONTINUE EFFORTS TO
ENCOURAGE THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO ACCEPT SUB-
STANTIAL NUMBERS OF THE REFUGEES FROM THAILAND.

5. JUST AS WE AND OTHER COUNTRIES ARE ACCEPTING FOR
PERMANENT SETTLEMENT SOME OF THE REFUGEES IN THAILAND,
PERHAPS THE THAI GOVERNMENT CAN ACCEPT SOME OF THE

REFUGEES NOW IN TEMPORARY CAMPS ON A LONGER-TERM BASIS. MOVEMENT IN THIS DIRECTION NEED NOT IMPLY THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF THAILAND IS PREPARED TO ACCEPT PERMANENTLY ALL THE REFUGEES NOW IN THAILAND. IN FACT WE UNDERSTAND THAT ANY PROGRESS TOWARD LOCAL SETTLEMENT OF REFUGEES IS PREMISED ON CONTINUING ACCEPTANCE OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES FROM THAILAND BY THE UNITED STATES AND OTHER COUNTRIES. AT THE SAME TIME, PROGRESS IN RESETTLEMENT FOR SOME REFUGEES IN THAILAND SHOULD MAKE IT EASIER FOR THE UNITED STATES TO CONTINUE ITS ACCEPTANCE PROGRAM FOR INDOCHINESE AS WE CAN DEMONSTRATE TO OUR CONGRESS THAT THERE IS EFFECTIVE, JOINT ACTION IN REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT.

6. IN MAKING THE TWO MILLION DOLLARS AVAILABLE TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THAILAND FOR REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT WE HAVE NO PRECONCEIVED FORMULA IN MIND. WE BELIEVE THE FUNDS MIGHT BEST BE USED IN PILOT PROJECTS WHICH INVOLVE SELECTING A SMALL NUMBER OF REFUGEES FROM THE PRESENT CAMPS AND PROVIDING FOR THESE REFUGEES THE MEANS TO BECOME MORE SELF-SUFFICIENT. PRESUMABLY SUCH PROJECTS COULD INVOLVE BOTH RELOCATION OF SOME REFUGEES AS WELL AS A PROJECT DISPERSING THE REFUGEES IN THE THAI POPULATION WITH A CHANGE IN THEIR ECONOMIC STATUS FROM THE PRESENT CAMP SITUATION.

7. FOR OUR PART, I AND MY STAFF ARE AVAILABLE AT ANY
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PAGE 03 BANGKO 25917 080209Z

TIME TO DISCUSS ANY ASPECT OF OUR PROPOSAL, OR THE
REFUGEE PROBLEM IN GENERAL. UNQUOTE

8. REQUEST EARLY DEPARTMENT APPROVAL OF PROPOSED TEXT
IN VIEW OF CONSIDERATIONS OUTLINED REFTTEL. ABRAMOWITZ

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